



## DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDER OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION FORCE  
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NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23505-1498

3980  
Ser 00T/909  
DEC 19 2000

### STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE 00-2

Subj: EARLY INVOLVEMENT BY COMOPTEVFOR IN THE ACQUISITION  
PROCESS

Ref: (a) DODDIR 5000.1 of 23 Oct 00  
(b) SECNAVINST 50002.B of 6 Dec 96  
(c) COMOPTEVFORINST 3960.1H

**1. Purpose.** To provide a standing procedure and common understanding of when early involvement occurs between COMOPTEVFOR and Program Developers and clarification on funding for early involvement.

#### **2. Background**

**a.** Both the Secretary of the Defense (SECDEF) and Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) have cited "early involvement" of the operational testers as essential for risk mitigation and success of acquisition programs. Reference (a) specifically states "Test and evaluation planning shall begin early in the acquisition process." SECDEF and SECNAV have not defined what constitutes early involvement. During the development process, risk mitigation is the responsibility of both the developer and the test community. However, during the development process, the developer evaluates, accepts or rejects the risks associated with cost, schedule, and system performance. Early involvement by the operational tester is primarily accomplished to benefit the program manager/developer, and provides an opportunity for the tester to gain insight, and provide feedback regarding the operational effectiveness and suitability of proposed technological solutions.

**b.** COMOPTEVFOR early involvement in the acquisition/development process has increased dramatically over the past several years with the proliferation of working groups and integrated product and process teams. Early involvement has created a strain in allocation of COMOPTEVFOR's manpower and

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funding as we fulfill our obligation to provide operational insight to program offices during systems development. This is accomplished to mitigate risk to successful completion of operational evaluation (OPEVAL).

**3. Procedure.** COMOPTEVFOR support for early involvement will continue to increase in tempo, but funding for this support previously available from COMOPTEVFOR's annual operating budget has diminished. Early involvement is viewed as a risk mitigation process for the program manager/developer, and OPEVAL is the means to mitigate the risk to the warfighter with regard to system effectiveness and suitability. COMOPTEVFOR has developed this definition for early involvement.

"Early involvement is any activity with a program from first expenditure of Operational Test Agency resources (funding or manpower) to the Operational Test Readiness Review (OTRR) for Operational Test (OT) resulting in a 'fleet release' recommendation (e.g., OPEVAL, FOT&E)."

Therefore, per reference (b) enclosure (7), paragraph 1.3.8, all program related costs incurred by COMOPTEVFOR in support of and associated with program development, to include travel and administrative expenses, prior to the OTRR for OT resulting in a 'fleet release' recommendation (e.g., OPEVAL) will be funded by the program offices. Operational test directors will request funding for early involvement through either inclusion in the test and evaluation master plan (TEMP) or via independent correspondence with the program office referencing the program's TEMP.

**4. Implementation.** SOP 00-2 is effective immediately and will be referred to in reference (c) as applicable.

**5. Effected SOPs and Related Policy and Information Notices.**  
None.

/S/  
R. E. BESAL

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COMOPTEVFOR (Lists I, III and IV)